

The Shape of Murder

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The Shape of Murder

by [sonderland](#)

Summary

Will Graham is working as a repairman at The Baltimore State Hospital when they acquire an unusual asset.

Chapter 1

Beverly looked grimly around the basement of the Baltimore State Hospital. The walls were heavy concrete. Despite the metropolitan location, no street noises could be heard, beneath the sidewalks. Not even the noises of the rest of the hospital reached these depths. There were no windows, nor any sign of natural light, but there was a chill down deep in the ward, as if a cold wind were blowing through a gap in the wall.

Beverly shivered. "I hate it down here. It feels like a tomb."

Will looked up from his clipboard. He tucked it under his arm, and signed, *Not our tomb*.

"Not yet." Beverly crossed her arms. "Let's hope this doesn't take long."

Will doubted it. Chilton would call him in to oil every squeaky hinge in the building if he could get away with it. Fortunately, with Jack around he needed to seem at least semi-responsible. That had included sending Will down with an escort. The "asset" was dangerous, according to both Jack and Chilton. It was the only thing that they had agreed on all day. The light fixtures and locking mechanisms had to be checked and double-checked, Chilton had told Will. "Only the best for our special guest."

Will scowled at the memory. Chilton was lucky he needed this job.

They passed a number of barred steel doors, but theirs was at the very end of the hallway, taller and thicker than the rest.

"After you," said Beverly.

The room had bare walls, a flickering fluorescent light, and a huge pane of glass that divided the room nearly in half.

Will did his usual checks on the lock that held the thick metal door in the glass wall shut. They all looked fine.

Will took a stepladder from the maintenance closet and busied himself with the lights. As the fluorescent bulb reached a more consistent glow, Beverly gasped.

One of the shadows behind the glass coalesced into a huge, looming figure.

Will froze. The creature looked like a hole in the world, with two bright eyes that seemed to glow. It stood taller than any man, with a huge rack of antlers jutting from its smooth head. As it turned to face them, it moved with an agile grace, though Will could hear the shaggy, predatory panting of its breath. He stood on his stepladder, unable to move.

The creature had no such affliction. It came up to the glass with alarming speed, and pounded a fist against it. The glass didn't so much as crack. The creature threw back its head and screamed.

Beverly was already on her walkie-talkie as Will blinked out of his daze.

"Backup! I need backup!"

A group of doctors burst into the room. Before they could see anything else, Will and Beverly were hustled out of the room by Doctor Chilton himself, smiling despite the panic in the air.

Beverly was shivering again. "What was THAT?!"

"That, my dear, is a Wendigo. No one has ever managed to get one in captivity before. It is quite a find."

Will signed to him.

Chilton raised an eyebrow and turned to Beverly. "What did he say?"

"He asked what's wrong with the creature."

"The Wendigo? Oh, nothing." Chilton grinned with terrible delight. "He's just hungry."

The cell was quiet the next time Will came down to the basement. Jack and Chilton were confident enough to let Will go alone; the Wendigo was behaving.

There was a slot in the door in the glass wall. The doctors and orderlies used it to pass food trays and other things into the cell. It was getting stuck open.

Oiling hinges, Will thought.

The Wendigo, for its (his?) part, stood motionless. But his eyes followed Will's every movement. Will found himself staring back.

Perhaps that is why his hand slipped.

Will cringed. He drew back his thumb. The skin of the pad of it had caught in the corner of the opening, and torn.

The slot swung shut with a sharp snap. The Wendigo crept forward to investigate. He extended a long, sharp finger to the underside of the opening, and came away with a spot of blood, Will's blood, on his finger. It stood out brightly against the blue-black sheen of the Wendigo's skin. Never looking away from Will, the Wendigo brought his hand to his face, and the digit, blood and all, disappeared into his mouth.

Will felt something wet against his palm. His attention finally drawn to it, he realized that he had never lowered his hand, and blood was trickling down from the cut. Will looked back to the Wendigo. His head was tipped forward in interest.

Repeating the Wendigo's gesture, Will continued to look at him, running his tongue across his palm, tracing the blood back to its source until his lips found the first incision. It tasted warm,

and sweet, and metallic.

The Wendigo was still watching him.

Will put his left hand to his chest, and brought his right back up to his mouth, bringing his index finger to his lips and neck before fluttering his hand down his chest.

Blood, Will signed.

The Wendigo uncurled his long fingers and repeated the gesture.

Blood.

Will smiled.

Doctor Bedelia du Maurier slid the observation window shut and walked away.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Will made more visits downstairs, taking his lunch with him to eat with the Wendigo. He would pull over an observation chair and sit across from him, watching the loping grace of his movements. He brought in a radio to play music while they both ate; Will from his paper bag, and the Wendigo from his metal tray. He watched Will eat with undisguised fascination, and listened to the music. Classical was the Wendigo's favorite.

Bedelia continued to observe, and continued to make her own notes.

An orderly would deliver the Wendigo's meals, and collect the metal trays afterwards. *Matthew Brown*, thought Will. That was his name. They would see each other on occasion, Will on his way back from lunch. Matthew Brown would always give Will a smile that was a little too knowing.

Will was making his way down the stairs with his brown paper bag, but was surprised to see Beverly there already. She waved him over, but made no move towards the cell. There was a great deal of noise coming from down the hall. Will was reminded uncomfortably of his and Beverly's first visit.

What's going on?

"Something happened when Chilton went to see the Wendigo. They were just running tests, they said, but it took a bite out of him. They're still trying to contain it."

Chilton was long gone--rushed to intensive care on a stretcher.

Beverly put a hand on Will's shoulder, keeping him from stepping forward. She lowered her voice and shook her head.

"You can't go in there yet. It's not safe."

Upstairs, Will could see Jack talking to someone in his office. The other man was tall and dark-haired, with an angular face that nodded stiffly and spoke a few words that Will could not hear. Jack sighed, nodded back, and the other man picked up his briefcase and left the office.

The man saw Will waiting outside. He cocked his head curiously, but said nothing and walked on. Will paused. There was something familiar in that expression, in those cool blue eyes and appraising stare.

The man left without incident, and Will knocked on the door. Jack waved him inside.

"Come on in. I trust you've heard about the incident."

It wasn't a question. Will nodded.

Jack shook his head and sighed again. "If I could, I'd have him transferred to some other facility. But any analysis of him has to take place here. We've got some local private investor. You saw him leaving?"

Another nod.

"Well, he won't have him moved. I don't like it any more than you do, but we are at the mercy of Mr. Dolarhyde."

"I'm telling you," said Chilton, "He's more useful to us dead."

Jack rubbed at his creased forehead. "And what do you think, Doctor du Maurier?"

"I think that this, in Dr. Chilton's own words, is a unique opportunity." Bedelia ignored Chilton's contemptuous sneer. "Wendigos can tell us more about the subconscious mind than any other known creature. If we can study his behavior, and his physiology--"

"That's my point exactly. We euthanize him, take out his brain, and run our tests on it. If you so desire, you can put his whole body through a CAT scan ten times. At least then," Chilton rubbed at his cheek, where the skin graft was still bandaged, "He'll be less likely to object."

Jack sighed. "Doctor du Maurier, we've had this thing here for over a month now, and it's been eating up our resources. Mr. Dolarhyde has already given us the go-ahead, and you have yet to show me anything conclusive."

"I know that. It has been difficult to run the kinds of tests we need with the limited space. If we could only...*observe* him, in his natural habitat..."

Chilton's head snapped up. "And what would that be? Out in the woods, *eating people*?!"

Bedelia glared. Before either could retort, there was a loud scrape as Jack stood up from his chair.

"Doctors, please. I have made my decision. In two days' time, the Wendigo will be euthanized and autopsied. The matter is closed."

Bedelia's gaze was cold. "I think that you are making a mistake."

"I am aware of that." Jack gestured for them both to leave his office, sitting back down in his chair. "Make what notes you can, Doctor."

Chilton hung back after she left, the sound of her heels fading rhythmically down the corridor.

"You made the right choice, Mr. Crawford."

Jack frowned. "I don't know how you can stand to study that thing. When you are done, I want the remains out of here by Monday. It gives me the creeps."

"I'm sorry," said Beverly. "I know it's not what you wanted to hear."

Will was hunched against the wall.

We have to help him.

"What??"

We have to get him out.

"Oh no. I'm not going against Jack on this one. And you know what that thing is."

Will shook his head.

There's something about him. He... Will stopped a moment, looking away. *He gets inside my head. I dream about him.*

Beverly frowned. "Maybe you *should* spend some time away from him."

Will glared. Beverly gave him a sympathetic smile.

"Look, I need to report back to Jack. Just...take it easy, okay?"

Will shrugged. Beverly squeezed his shoulder, giving him a lingering look before she left.

Still, Will found himself in the hallway under the hospital mere minutes later. He was not alone.

Walking back to the stairs towards him was a woman Will recognized.

Hello, Doctor:

"Hello, Will Graham." Bedelia favored him with a small smile. "I believe that we can help each other. We have a mutual interest."

Will smiled back.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for your comments!

Chapter 3

It was fifteen minutes after the day shift when Will went back to the basement. He nudged the camera at a slight angle, and began to unscrew the cover of the closest audio recorder.

"Hey, Will."

It was Matthew Brown. He was the only orderly he had ever seen in this hall. Now, he was standing between Will and the Wendigo's cell.

"You don't need to worry about those. I disconnected the wires already. The camera angle's good, though, I usually have to turn those off."

I think there's been a mistake, Will signed.

Matthew either didn't understand or didn't care.

"I've taken a personal interest in him. I like to talk to the Wendigo, sometimes. I like to watch him."

Will put his toolkit down and took a half-step back.

"Will." Matthew's grin turned sharp. "I don't think you understand. I won't let you take him away."

Matthew shoved Will up against the wall with surprising strength. Will choked out a gasp.

There was no sign of anyone else in the concrete corridor. There were no echoes, no noises. Any noise would have reverberated in the silence.

Stocking feet, however, made no sound. Bedelia strode silently up behind Matthew; one hand held her high-heeled shoes. The other hand held a syringe.

The needle plunged deep into Matthew's exposed neck. He recoiled, releasing Will, who could only stare as he collapsed to the ground.

"Quickly," said Bedelia. "We don't have much time."

The laundry van had been planned. The cooler was a last-minute addition.

The cab was big enough to hold it behind the front two seats, in the space before the cargo area.

A laundry van had been a good idea. No one would notice a few more bloodied sheets.

Matthew Brown had been a dangerous person. Will knew that. He had a way of telling about people.

There was very little ice in the cooler, but there was no smell coming out, as far as Will could tell.

The Wendigo had smelled it, though. He had smelled it on Will's hands, under his fingernails when he opened the door in the glass wall. The Wendigo had looked at him with something like rapture.

Bedelia said nothing as Will drove them out to Wolf Trap. Her hands were folded in her lap, and she looked straight ahead.

The Wendigo was sat in the back on top of the sheets, his head bowed to accommodate his antlers.

"I'm surprised he's so calm," Bedelia said, mildly. "I half expected to him to fall back on instinct when he smelled the blood."

He hadn't, though. Will still marveled at the methodical way he had helped them to break up the body.

Bedelia inclined her head toward the cooler. "Make it last," she said.

At Will's incredulous expression, she gave a sad smile.

"I don't like it any more than you do. But you saw how he was back at the hospital. He might only be so calm now because he got a bite of Chilton the other day."

Will returned his attention to the road.

"Like I said. I don't like the circumstances. But if you don't feed him, he will die."

The storm cellar under Will's house was cold and dark, but Bedelia said it would do just fine.

"They prefer the dark," she had told him. And the strong door would keep the dogs out.

A place for you, signed Will.

There had been a piece, a small piece, of meat that Will had cut off for the Wendigo. Bedelia had told him that it would make the Wendigo stronger.

("I didn't understand the scope of his power before the incident with Chilton. He has influence, Will. Be careful.")

It was true. As the Wendigo ate, Will began to feel a strengthening of presence, so definite that he could almost hear it, like thoughts in the back of his own head, with a voice that was not his own:

Stay with me.

Will closed two fingers and a thumb, shaking his head.

I will be close, he signed.

The Wendigo nodded, slow and languid.

Close, he signed back.

The cooler was above ground, in the shed near Will's fishing tackle. It would keep.

Chilton paced up and down his office, a vein in his forehead throbbing dangerously.

"And you didn't see anything? Anything at all?"

Will shook his head. Beverly glanced back to Chilton.

"No."

"I know *that*." Chilton sat back down in his desk chair with measured gravity. "This does not reflect well on the integrity of Baltimore State, or on myself. Not well at all." Chilton picked up a pencil from his desk and began to fiddle with it.

"An invaluable asset has gone. And, on top of all that, one of our longest-standing orderlies has gone missing."

Will signed to Chilton.

"Matthew Brown?" Beverly asked. "Was that the orderly?"

Chilton paused in playing with his pencil and pointed it towards Will.

"The very same. What do you know about Matthew Brown?"

Beverly interpreted as Will signed, "I--Will, saw him around the holding cell when he was fixing the locks. He would stare at him, and sometimes talk to him. Will saw him there more than once."

"You may be onto something there, Will. Come to think of it, Matthew had an odd record. Very odd indeed."

Chilton made a sweeping gesture.

"You are free to go. We will start the hunt for Matthew Brown immediately. Your compliance is certainly appreciated." He grinned at Will.

Will smiled back. *Dick*.

"What did he say?"

"He says thanks."

Mr. Francis Dolarhyde was informed that the asset he had invested so much into keeping, dead or alive, at The Baltimore State Hospital had gone missing. He had demurred the profuse apologies, and assured them that, while he would have to pull the remaining funding, he did not hold Baltimore State legally liable, and would pursue no action against them.

After all, he had his own ways of keeping track of assets. And Will Graham had caught his attention.

Chapter 4

Will portioned out the contents of the cooler, piece by piece. He went and saw the Wendigo every day before and after work. Will watched him eat. He found that he could not look away, even knowing what he was eating.

Whom, projected the Wendigo, conversationally. Will gave a wry smile.

The Wendigo grew stronger over those few weeks. And yet, he never made a move to escape the cellar. He never so much as approached the stairs. As Bedelia had told him, he stuck to the shadows.

Will noticed that the Wendigo was smelling him, more and more. It wasn't the way he had been when he first saw him in the hospital, or the way he had acted when he saw the body of Matthew Brown. This was something else.

There was no doubt in Will's mind that the Wendigo could escape if he wanted to. But there was an intimacy between them, a closeness that he did not want to release.

Not so close, but closer than he knew, was Francis Dolarhyde. He would hide himself in the brackish woods near Will's house; the dogs were restless, but Will was keeping them close and out of danger.

Francis knew that the Wendigo was close at hand. He had not seen him, not yet, but he knew Will had to keep him near. For now, he was content to record his videos and take comfort in the fact that Will did not know he was there.

Baltimore State stayed much as it always had been. Will continued fixing any minor inconvenience that Chilton decided required his attention, and he kept his and Bedelia's secret in confidence. He would interview with Bedelia, describing to her in detail all of the changes and developments in the Wendigo's behavior.

Beverly had noticed that Will was distracted, he could tell. He waved away her concerns and gave half-explanations, and Beverly continued to keep him company when she could, gossiping about the latest bureau drama.

Should you be telling me this? he would always ask.

She would always shrug and say, "You won't tell on me."

And he wouldn't. But he couldn't tell her about the shed, or the storm cellar, or the dreams of blood and ice that he continued to have. That, Will feared, was more than he could explain away.

It was not all human meat that Will fed to the Wendigo. Bedelia had assured him that butcher's cuts would do, to tide him over.

The Wendigo would eat the meat with no apparent distaste. He would savor it, as he savored all his meals.

Will brought down a Victrola he had found in his attic, relieved that he had not thrown it away. He played classical music off of thrifted records. The Wendigo shut his eyes as he listened, lost in the music.

Will put a tentative hand to the Wendigo's cheek. The Wendigo leaned into the touch. He opened his eyes to look at Will, his eyes hooded with the spell of the music and...something. A challenge.

The Wendigo reached out and undid the top button of Will's flannel.

Will jerked back as if scalded. He shook his head, vigorously, the hand so recently cupping the Wendigo's cheek now clutching his shirt closed. Will nearly ran out of the cellar, bolting the door behind him and sinking down onto the floor, rubbing a hand through his hair.

Sleep. He needed sleep.

But Will found himself restless, shifting from angle to angle in the confines of his bed, uncomfortably aware of the deep, dark spaces under his house. He could not distract himself from what waited below, what beckoned even from the recesses of his mind.

Stay, he heard again.

Will threw off the covers.

Will stepped through the cellar door, bolting it before turning to the stairs. His slippered feet creaked loudly, too loudly, against the old wood steps.

Will cringed at the noise, but he knew that stealth was not a priority here. There was something in the dark, waiting. Something that knew him.

Will flicked on the lights, but they only served to accentuate the shadows. He felt an impossible chill breeze blow through, from somewhere. He shivered.

In the deepest part of a shadow to the back of the cellar, a part of the darkness stepped forward. The Wendigo's huge, antlered form loomed large in the darkness, his shining skin catching the meager light, his eyes almost glowing. He stepped towards Will.

Somewhere in the back of Will's mind, he could still hear the Victrola playing. It was a song he could not remember the name of, but it was rich, and heady, and enveloping.

Will toed out of his slippers, his feet bare against the cold concrete floor, and walked towards the Wendigo. A scant few feet away, he paused. Will held his gaze, his steady fingers untying

the knot of his robe and letting it slide off his shoulders and behind him onto the floor.

The Wendigo inhaled a sharp breath. Will marveled that he was not colder--naked as he was, amid the loam and the chill. But the Wendigo was radiating pulses of heat that seemed to echo the beating of Will's heart--loud, now, somewhere around his ears. The Wendigo raked his eyes over Will, and now Will recognized the look from earlier.

It was *hunger*.

Will closed the distance between them and put his hands on the Wendigo's shoulders. He did not need to stand on his toes, but it was a near thing, and the Wendigo accommodatingly lowered his head so that Will could bring their lips together.

The Wendigo was as warm as Will had imagined, and his mouth was warmer still; his smooth skin yielded open to a wet, pulsing heat. His teeth, not quite so sharp as Will had expected, nipped at his lower lip until Will gasped, and the Wendigo slid his tongue inside, and Will knew that it *tasted*.

Will groaned, sliding his hands up to his occipitals and beside his neck for better purchase, guiding the prodigious head to his collarbone, keening when he bit the tender skin.

As the nips and bites traveled down his chest, Will scrabbled for purchase, his hands settling in the huge antlers, his hands gripping the solid projections so hard he feared he might snap them.

You can't hurt me, came the reassurance at the back of Will's head. He was almost annoyed at the Wendigo's confidence in that, but was distracted by new waves of sensation as he raked his long nails along Will's sides. He shuddered into it, his legs wrapping around the Wendigo's waist, the hard length of Will's cock pressed into the taut firmness of the Wendigo's stomach.

Will could feel an answering hardness pressing into him, and he lowered a hand from an antler to the Wendigo's shoulder. The Wendigo turned them around so that Will's back was to the wall. Will lowered himself, savoring the scrape of the rough stone against his back, his legs drawing the Wendigo closer.

The Wendigo's antlers were braced almost into the wall, the leverage helping to keep them in place as Will maneuvered himself, taking them both in hand. The Wendigo's huge, glossy length had unfurled itself from somewhere inside, and Will marveled at the difference between them in the size and the color, his own flushed red and the Wendigo's tinged a dark and lustrous blue, but both throbbing and desperate with need.

The Wendigo trembled with the sweet friction of it as Will traced the head, the blunt nails of Will's other hand sinking into his shoulder. Even here the Wendigo's skin was perfectly smooth, and almost like leather in its supple strength, and Will's hand, already slick with his own precum, gripped them both together as fully as he could and began to move.

The Wendigo made a noise that was half a groan and half a snarl, and wrapped his own hand around to join Will's, his other hand supporting Will's backside, a finger dipping tantalizingly

close to Will's hole.

Will's grip on their cocks became more erratic, but the Wendigo continued to pump them both with a maddeningly measured rhythm, though his breathing was rough and lathered, and he was sending out what might have been pleas of *Will, Will, Will*.

As the Wendigo's motions began to tumble out of measure, he finally, finally dipped his finger in and will heard a deep rumble of *Will*, please, before Will came, shuddering through the impact and biting, hard, into the skin between the Wendigo's neck and shoulder, and as Will dug his nails deep into his back he felt the Wendigo's own release, hot and wet against him as Will heard coursing through him, *Yours, yours, yours*.

Will did not plan on telling Bedelia. As soon as he walked into her office, though, he could tell that she knew.

"*Will*."

Will rolled his eyes. *Don't start*.

Bedelia rubbed at her temple, sighing.

"You're getting too close to this, Will."

Will gave her a rueful look. *It's a little late for that, Doctor*.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Will beckoned the Wendigo forward. *This way.*

The Wendigo followed Will out into the yard. It was a dark night, and Will lived a long way from other houses. The Wendigo gleamed bright in the moonlight, and as he stood in the yard he threw his shoulders back and exalted in the cool night air.

Somewhere in the distance, an animal cried out. The Wendigo mimicked it with perfect accuracy.

Will walked up behind him, his bare feet quiet and soft on the grass. The Wendigo turned to meet him, and signed, *Thank you.*

Smiling, Will put his hands on his broad, smooth shoulders and gave him a soft kiss. The Wendigo answered by deepening it, lavishing his attentions from Will's mouth to his neck, inhaling the scent of him, his teeth and tongue exploring the flesh.

Will sighed deeper into the embrace, his arms around the Wendigo's neck.

Will's back was to the woods behind him, but the Wendigo's eyes were open, looking deep into the trees with a predator's keen awareness.

Francis Dolarhyde looked away from his camera and froze before creeping away.

The Wendigo's strength was failing. He was restless, and the fine inky sheen of his skin was beginning to peel away, revealing an alarming redness beneath.

"We always knew this was going to happen," Bedelia said with maddening patience. "The meat in your shed has been used up for almost a week now, and that's what he needs to survive."

Will looked up at her from the chair in her office. *What are we supposed to do?*

"We could release him, in a controlled environment. I have a house up by the water. It's removed enough, but we cannot control what he does once he's loose."

Loose?

"Yes. He's a fascinating creature, Will, but we cannot give him what he needs."

Will not, thought Will, and was immediately alarmed at himself.

When?

"Soon. Tomorrow. I can have things in order by then."

Will looked away.

"We can't keep him alive, Will. We can at least try to keep him safe."

It was a novelty, coming out into the daylight like this. The Wendigo stood on his own in the yard, as the dogs stirred curiously indoors.

He wished that Will were there with him. But then, good Will did not fully understand. Not yet.

There was a rustling from the trees. Francis Dolarhyde came forward, his camera bag over his shoulder.

"I hoped I would see you here alone. I know you saw me, the other night."

The Wendigo inclined his head.

"I have something for you. An...an offering."

Dolarhyde reached into his camera bag and pulled out a tupperware. The Wendigo raised what would have been an eyebrow at the presentation, but he could smell the unmistakable signs that the meat was human.

"I have killed before. But this time, it was for you." Dolarhyde handed the container over with reverence.

The Wendigo took it, graciously, peeling back the lid. He inhaled once again, and began to eat, savoring each bite.

"I want to become what you are," Dolarhyde told the Wendigo as he ate. "I know that it's possible."

The Wendigo rolled his shoulders back, still reveling in his meal. *Perhaps*, he projected, and Dolarhyde shivered at the Wendigo's presence in his mind.

"You can help me, in my becoming. But I know you won't help me for nothing. But I can do something for you. I can free you."

The Wendigo's eyes flashed.

"I'm going to kill Will Graham."

We have to take you to another place. A house, of Doctor du Maurier's. Bedelia. Do you remember her?

The Wendigo nodded.

We're going tonight. We'll be back later, and we'll take you there.

It is for the best, Will heard, and those were the exact same words he had been thinking in that moment.

Will leaned up and kissed the Wendigo on the cheek.

I'll see you tonight.

Tonight.

The house was as isolated as Bedelia had promised, sitting on top of a bluff by the water, beside a vast expanse of trees.

Will stood with the Wendigo in the kitchen, looking out through the huge plate-glass window.

Will.

The Wendigo was standing behind him, his hands on Will's shoulders. *There is something I need to tell you.*

Will leant his head into the Wendigo's shoulder. *What's that?*

There is a dangerous man coming here, tonight. Francis Dolarhyde.

Will took a step back and whirled around to face him. *What?!*

I believe that he wants to kill you.

Will's mouth fell open. *How--how does he even know where we are??*

The Wendigo gave a bare hint of a smile. *Because I told him.*

Before Will could articulate any kind of a response, the Wendigo shoved him bodily aside. Will stared in horror as something pierced the window and made a bloody impact in the Wendigo's shoulder.

Francis Dolarhyde stepped into view. "That bullet was not meant for you."

This is how you meant to kill? With a gun? I expected better.

"Fine," Dolarhyde threw the gun aside with a snarl. "Tooth and nail, then. But I will kill Will Graham."

The Wendigo stepped forward. *You will not.*

Dolarhyde tilted his head, baring his teeth.

"I came here for death tonight. And, by God, you will give it to me."

Before Will's eyes, the Wendigo leapt for Dolarhyde, moving with preternatural speed. Dolarhyde ducked down and sunk teeth (new teeth, when had he put them in?) into the Wendigo's leg. As the Wendigo stumbled, Dolarhyde pressed a thumb into the bullet wound in the Wendigo's shoulder and sunk those unnaturally sharp teeth into his neck. The Wendigo roared in anguish and pain.

Will was still standing frozen in the kitchen. The Wendigo was not strong enough to take him, weakened these last weeks and injured as he was. Not alone.

Dolarhyde had the Wendigo on his knees, panting from his own injuries but grinning in presumed triumph.

Will heard his own name coming from the Wendigo. *Will*. Not an apology, not an explanation. Only his name.

Will grabbed the largest knife in arm's reach and ran through what was left of the plate glass window. Dolarhyde turned to look at him, but Will slashed at his stomach, the Wendigo shakily getting to his feet. Dolarhyde made to lunge at him, but the Wendigo was behind him now, and he slashed sharp claws into his throat.

Will stabbed the knife deep, deeper than he could have believed himself capable of, into Dolarhyde's chest, and Dolarhyde sank to the ground, choking on a mouthful of blood.

Will looked down at himself; his arms, his chest, his whole body seemed to be covered in blood, shining black in the moonlight. He swallowed, nervously, only to realize that he was *tasting* it.

He looked to the Wendigo. The Wendigo was staring at Will with undisguised awe. He was bloodied, too, from his own wounds and Dolarhyde's, and the savage pleasure of it radiated off of him in palpable waves.

Will sank to his knees, almost at the edge of the bluff, panting. The Wendigo sank down to meet him. He brushed a thumb over Will's cheek, and Will finally met his eyes. There was joy, there, and wonder, and love.

After all that had just happened, Will had not expected that. He had not expected *tenderness*.

He wrapped his arms around the Wendigo, holding him close.

This, and even the Wendigo's voice in his mind sounded enraptured, *This is your becoming, Will*.

And Will could feel it in himself, the taste of blood, and tears (when had he started crying?) mingled in his mouth with a strange, wondrous fascination, and he could feel, somewhere, something like the hunger that the Wendigo felt.

It's beautiful.

The Wendigo had what must have been tears in his eyes. *I am not alone.*

No, and this time, with an effort, Will projected his own thoughts forward, *No, you never were.*

The Wendigo gasped, and Will swallowed it, wrapping the Wendigo into a fierce, capturing kiss. The Wendigo kissed back with equal fervor, the tears and blood on their faces mingling, wrapped up so deeply in each other, shining black in the moonlight.

As Will wrapped his arm around the Wendigo's waist, he rocked them both softly, so softly, and as he came up for air, resting his forehead against the Wendigo's, he tumbled the both of them off of the bluff.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for all your lovely comments and kudos and bookmarks! This has been the first fanart/fanfic jam I've participated in, and I know I'll want to do it again in the future. It's been so much fun, and getting encouragement and feedback has been the best part. I hope you have enjoyed The Shape of Murder.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!